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Assimilated Rank of Medical Officers.

IN the days of feudality, when the iron hand of semi-barbaric military power ruled the people, and when the ascendancy of brute force prevented any appreciation of mental power and cultivation, it is scarcely a matter of wonder that civil pursuits, however noble their character, should have been regarded with contempt; and that their followers should have been exposed to humiliation and degradation. In these latter days, it would be natural to expect that military bodies, with an enlightened adaptation to the age, and from the consideration of their own interests, would do all in their power to give elevation and respectability to the professional men associated with them; and thus secure for themselves and the public interest, the best abilities in the adjunct civil, or staff corps so necessary to proper military efficiency. Such, however, is not the fact. There never has been a period when a more petty, mean, and narrow-minded hostility has been exhibited by military bodies against their civil corps, than is now shown, especially by the United States Navy, and particularly against its medical department. This in part arises from the fact that the prejudices of society have awarded the military profession a respectability of station, irrespective of intellectual culture and mental expansion, indeed even when accompanied by coarseness and brutality. This engenders an idea in the military man that his pursuit is intrinsically superior to all others, and begets a contempt for what he styles "mere civilians;" hence, the hostility to the medical corps is one of caste, and overrides all considerations of public or private interest. But again it seems to such persons a violation of military

VOL. V.—4

supremacy, that the duties of the medical officer are not, in their whole extent, subject to military dictation; they regard it as a violation of discipline that his remedies will operate without waiting for the command of the captain, or without reporting to the first lieutenant, or the officer of the deck.

This ship-board feeling of hostility extends to all divisions of the medical department, from the chief medical officer of a ship or squadron to the stewards, nurses, and attendants of the "sick boy," as the place allotted to the sick, in a man-of-war, is called. It is manifested by all kinds of tyrannical exercise of official authority; annoyances and humiliations are thrown in the way of duty, and an insulting supremacy claimed over medical officers, upon occasions of merely social and ceremonial associations; a superiority which is intended to assert the intrinsic claims of the military, over all civil pursuits, as they are represented by the medical department of the navy. The insult is not so much to the individuals of the medical corps of the navy, as to the professional pursuits they represent. "I'll go home and send him back to his county judgeship," said a commodore of a secretary of the navy, who had disapproved his proceedings. The medical man who would make use of his professional privileges to gratify his private enmities, as any medical man might, would justly be called a scoundrel, by the very men who will make use of the privileges of their station to inflict unnecessary annoyances upon him. They will keep him standing on the wharf, in a broiling sun, or beating rain, and put off to the last minute sending a boat for him, when they would promptly send for one of their own servants; and by a thousand similar petty annoyances and vexations in relation to himself and his duties, render his time uncomfortable.

Committed to a body, entertaining such opinions of "mere civilians," and with the power and the disposition to give expression to its opinions in an annoying manner, it is evident that the medical staff need some protection against the exercise of that power—some guaranty that the intrinsic respectability of the medical profession shall be regarded in the navy. Hence, an assimilated rank, giving this guaranty, has been sought, and its

necessity made so apparent, that, against much naval opposition, it was instituted by executive regulations in 1846. The navy, however, with an assumption inconsistent with its professed administration of discipline, though perfectly consistent with its idea of its own power, set itself in opposition to the authority of the nation, as expressed through the civil head of the nation, and the military chief of the navy—the President of the United States—and pronounced this regulation a nullity, because it was not a law of Congress. To remove such a subterfuge, the medical corps of the navy, and the medical profession of the United States, have asked of Congress the establishment, by law, of an assimilated rank, and, in obedience to this call, the House of Representatives requested from the President, information upon the subject. The President referred the matter to a board composed exclusively of line officers—captains—most, if not all, of whom had been in actual opposition to the claims of the medical corps, and some of them had signed a memorial, asking for the repeal of the existing regulations. This board, with the inconsistency which ever attends a spirit of injustice, concedes the whole principle of assimilated rank, but makes it a mere word of promise, broken in the detail of its fulfilment.

The entire report of this board is childishly adverse to the rights of medical officers, and shows what very small men may be “distinguished naval officers.” The following is an extract from this report:—

“*Be it further enacted*, That when sea officers, civil officers, and engineers, shall be required to act together, on boards, councils, or surveys, or other occasions where their joint views or opinions are to be expressed, and in all messes of officers, the superior sea officer present, shall preside, whatever may be his relative precedence, and may exercise command over the other members, to direct the course of proceedings, and to preserve order.”

The only “boards, councils, or surveys,” in which medical officers would be likely to be associated with line officers, would be on surveys of sick and wounded men, for invaliding or pensions, and upon medicines, supposed to be unfit for use. These

are subjects upon which line, or sea-officers, as they call themselves, would be entirely ignorant; they would be compelled to get their information from, and have their opinions directed by their medical associates; and yet, so exacting are the claims of military prestige, that the line officer, though inferior in rank, must preside over a board, in which he is a nullity. Here is at once a proposed legal embodiment of the contempt in which the medical profession is held. The medical officer is unfit to preside over a board, controlled by his opinions and information, but a young lieutenant or midshipman must have the place of command and dignity.

The proposition to make any line officer, however junior, the presiding officer of the mess table, is no less offensive and insulting.

At mess tables there is no rank; though eating and drinking is a necessity of nature, it is not exactly a military duty, and besides, each mess by common vote elects its presiding officer, the *caterer*, who regulates and controls the table, and dispenses the common funds of the mess. Yet every old surgeon, though he may be gray with age and service, is, for the gratification of military arrogance, to be presided over, governed, and *kept in order* by any young lieutenant, or passed midshipman who happens to be the senior line-officer, present at what may be called the family table. One would suppose that these old surgeons, whom the country and the profession consider tolerably respectable men, must be a boisterous, unruly set of boys on shipboard; whilst these navy lieutenants and midshipmen are models of gravity, order, and sobriety. This is illiberality—run so blind and mad as not to see the absurdity of its antics.

Again, this board was required to arrange the relation between staff officers of the navy, and staff officers of the army, but, as this navy board would only consent that its oldest medical officers should have a rank corresponding to that of *assistant surgeons in the army of four years' standing*, it chose to abandon the regulation of the relation between the medical officers of the two services, rather than its own prejudiced opinions. The following is the language of the board:—

"The board of navy officers, after a very careful examination and reconsideration of the subject, and with a desire to give due importance to the respective duties of the sea and civil officers, considers surgeons, pursers, and chaplains in the navy, as only fairly entitled to precedence with lieutenants in the navy—a grade corresponding with captains in the army, with which rank and precedence is granted to assistant surgeons of over four years' standing in the army." Now, among these same naval surgeons are men who have been in the service over half a century; are the men who have the medical charge of our extensive and palace-like naval hospitals; and, in the capacity of fleet surgeons, have the direction of the medical interests of squadrons; and yet, according to the notions of these navy captains, none of them must rank higher than an assistant surgeon of four years' standing in the army!!! Could there be a greater evidence of narrow-minded prejudice, riding headlong over common justice and common sense?

Although a small affair, it would be injustice to the recent naval board, to omit all mention of a matter which sufficiently shows the calibre of that board. It is the attempt to legalize the terms "sea officer," and "civil officer," instead of "line" and "staff." The former terms are objected to, by the medical officers, because they do not imply the truth. If sea duty makes "sea officers," medical officers have a right above every other grade of commissioned officers, to this title; and so long as they are subject to military duty, and military exactions, they are not "civil officers," and the members of the board must have known that the British government, by the most decided action, has recently repudiated the separation of the medical staff from other military officers.

The *Illustrated London News*, of August 3d, contains the following:—

"The government, it is confidently rumored, have resolved on giving the military Order of the Bath, to distinguished military and naval surgeons. The most eminent military and naval surgeons have refused to receive the civil decoration of the Bath."

This is in strong contrast with the illiberal hostility now being manifested toward the humble rank which has been assigned to

our own military and naval surgeons; and we hope the example which Great Britain has shown of encouraging the medical arm of military service, will be appropriately followed by our government.

Legislation Necessary to the Support of the Medical Profession.

By THOS. J. CORSON, M. D.

"The skill of the physician shall lift up his head: and in the sight of great men he shall be in admiration."

IN looking over the *Reporter* for August and September, I met with an article on "Medical Reform," by Dr. Stuart. The general course of reasoning pursued in this article pleased me very well, and very closely agreed with my own views on this subject. The necessity of effecting a reform in the medical profession must be admitted by all intelligent persons, but the means by which this necessary reform is to be wrought are not so easily discovered. Without intending to doubt the sincerity of the views expressed by the author, I must beg leave to differ from him in some respects.

From the tone of his article, the boldness with which he advances his propositions, and the ardor of his language, I do not think it possible for me to be mistaken in supposing him to be a young man; one whose honors are fresh upon him, and whose laurels are yet to be won; and who has but just started in life, with the very laudable determination of exalting the dignity of the profession, and expurgating from its ranks all quackery and charlatanism. When he shall have grown older, and have become more fully acquainted with the difficulties to be overcome in changing long-established usages—however desirable such change may be—he will be less sanguine in his expectations. He should know that by obeying the direction "*festima lente*," he will be more apt to succeed than by rushing directly "*in medias pugnes*."

I do not agree with the author in believing that our profession is "rapidly declining in respectability." 'Tis true that owing to the almost interminable number of so-called doctors, who are sent out from the thousand and one medical schools of our country, the intelligent public have become more cautious of physicians. And well should they be, since there are regularly chartered colleges of medicine which allow diplomas to men who, from their shameful ignorance and utter want of gentlemanly feeling, would be a disgrace to any profession. But a well-educated and honorable physician can establish and maintain his proper position in society by pursuing an upright and gentlemanly course of conduct, and carefully secluding himself from quackery in every form; for "*quisque suæ fortunæ faber est.*" Merit will be rewarded, and although a dozen "doctors' shingles" may be stuck up around such a man's office, yet he will be sought after by intelligent people, who can discriminate between merit and mere pretension. If a physician is not respected, you may depend upon it, it is his own fault:—

"The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
The man's the *goud* for a' that."

The author says, "Legislation cannot avail even were the legislators willing to assist us." The truth of this proposition I deny in toto. How are we to be protected if not by "the strong arm of the law?" He appears to trust entirely to the exertions of the "American Medical Association." If this body had the power to enforce their wise recommendations, all would be well enough; but as it is, all that its members can do is to advise certain changes. And as long as men and colleges have their selfish ends to gain, they will not comply with the recommendations of the Association when they conflict with their own interests, unless forced to do so. If our legislators would enact laws by which the wholesome advice of the Association could be carried into effect, then our profession would soon flourish and be exalted in dignity. Then physicians would be *entitled* to greater respect; for if the requirement for graduation were higher, then so many ignorant and undeserving men could not attain the de-

44 Corson, *Legislation necessary to the Medical Profession.*

gree of "M. D." Then the words of Hudibras could not be so truthfully used as in many cases they can now:—

"For men are brought to worse distresses,
By taking physic than diseases;
And therefore commonly recover
As soon as doctors give them over."

Why is it that our profession occupies a position so much more exalted in Europe than it does here? Simply because there it is more fully protected by law. Colleges are thus enabled to be more severe in their examinations, because if a student is rejected there, he cannot, as is the case in this country, go to some little "grinding school," where the payment of fees is the most important requisite for graduation, and soon come out "with his new diploma in his hat-crown."

I hope that any apparent personality on my part will be excused by Dr. Stuart. I have not intended to say anything that would be in the least degree suggestive of a doubt of his sincerity. Although his views differ somewhat from mine, yet he has shown a good intention in his articles, and deserves the thanks of the profession for speaking out thus boldly. May he continue in the good work, and may his efforts to exalt our beloved science be eminently successful!

I entertain no fears in regard to the stability of our science. It will ever be respected, and will eventually occupy its deservedly exalted station, notwithstanding the great number of shame-faced and ignorant quacks who now crowd its ranks.

Allow me also to close my already too long essay, by an extract from the writings of the Poet-Physician, Holmes:—

"In yon fair niche, by countless billows laved,
Trace the deep lines that Sydenham engraved;
On yon broad front that breasts the changing swell,
Mark where the ponderous sledge of Hunter fell;
By that square buttress look where Louis stands,
The stone yet warm from his uplifted hands;
And say, O Science, shall thy life-blood freeze,
When fluttering folly flaps on walls like these?"

JAMESVILLE, October 8th, 1851.

How to Diminish Quackery in the Medical Profession.

By S. S. BROOKS, M. D.

As this great object seems so desirable, I hope it will not be considered forward in me to offer my mite in aid of its accomplishment. Therefore I respectfully suggest for the consideration of the profession, and particularly for that of the American Medical Association, the following measure:—

Let each and every medical college make it a part of its duty to require of its candidates for a diploma, at the time they deposit their theses, a written pledge with the following provisions:—

That, should they be admitted into the profession, they will endeavor faithfully to observe and follow the Code of Ethics of the American Medical Association; that they will not countenance quackery in any form, but do all in their power, both by precept and example, to suppress and abolish it. And further, at the time of conferring the degrees, let this pledge be publicly read, and the graduates reminded of their obligation to follow it. Let this be done in such a manner that the public may clearly understand its intent and meaning; and that every graduate who may practice irregularly, violates his obligations.

I contend that such a pledge is now implied when a man graduates, but the people do not so understand it.

The profession of medicine is represented to be a great and noble fraternity, and the admission into it, as an object greatly to be desired. Yet unlike other fraternal associations, it places few restrictions upon the conduct of its members, and no written obligation whatever. If it is an honor to receive the degree of M. D., and thus be admitted into the fraternity, let him who seeks it be willing cheerfully to agree to conduct himself in accordance with the established precepts of the profession, from which he expects to receive benefits, and by which he may be enabled to confer them upon others.

The colleges have the power to adopt such a measure, and as it is from them that the student receives his early impressions

concerning his duties, they are bound, it seems to me, to pursue some such course.

To them has been confided the responsibility of making and admitting members into the profession; and they owe it to their alumni, to each other, to themselves individually, and to the people. To their alumni—for the purpose of protecting the honestly disposed among them; to each other—so that all may strengthen the bands of union between them; to themselves individually—because the honor of a school depends, in a great degree, upon the character and conduct of its graduates, by whom, when they go into the world, the true interests of the profession are to be promoted; to the people—because the community should be informed what is the line of distinction between the true and false in the demeanor of the profession.

It seems to be the duty of the profession generally to consider this matter, and in some way to make the people know that those who practice irregularly are not honorable members of the profession. For how common it is for the charlatan to boast in his advertisements that he is a graduate of such and such a school; thereby endeavoring to produce the impression on the public mind that the college approves his course. And how lamentable, yet how common it is to find that really intelligent persons in the community, look upon the greatest advertising quack as one of the great men in medicine, whose name is placed in the catalogue of honor as equal to the truly great Physick, Parrish, Chapman, Wood, and others who adorn the world with their achievements in science, and their moral virtues. Indeed it is truly sickening to find that in the view of the mass of people, the truly great, and the miserably low, stand side by side, as equal benefactors of the human race; their diplomas perhaps having been obtained from the same source.

PHILADELPHIA, 9 Mo., 1851.

Latin Prescriptions. By JAMES H. STUART, A. M., M. D.

ECCE VERBUM! If this was not emphatically *the* age of absurd humbug and fanaticism, a man would righteously be accounted a fool who should attempt the task which I now undertake; viz., a *defence* of the time-honored custom of writing prescriptions in Latin. What! *Defend* that which the learning and experience of our profession have pronounced not only convenient, but really necessary for perspicuity, elegance, and true safety? Even so. Fanatics having exhausted their folly upon religion and politics, have commenced a crusade against medicine, probably supposing that physic has not enough enemies in her own camp, but needs an attack from without. Faugh! It almost defiles one's pen to notice the childish and querulous complaints made against medicine, and its "uncertainty," by the very men who, in the Legislature and other public bodies, have vied with each other in rabid eagerness to bring down the tone of medical education, by chartering one tenpenny college after another, each having full powers to grant diplomas to their Paracelsian pupils. We object not to colleges in themselves. The more *good* ones the better. But it is not reasonable to restrain them from issuing absolutely unlimited numbers of "licenses to kill?" Let them be merely for instruction, and have no other power. Why cannot our legislators attend to their legitimate business, and not leave, session after session, really important matters unconsidered in order that they may grant divorces to pretty women from *other* states; and charter useless and worse than useless institutions? (I accuse the Pennsylvania Legislature of doing this;* and make the accusation boldly, for it cannot be denied, and the people should know how their representatives are attending to their interests.)

When one thinks of these things, he can scarce help exclaiming, with Borrow, in his *Lavengro*, "As I was telling you just now,

* This I assert from personal knowledge and on my own authority. The New Yorkers come habitually to Pennsylvania to be divorced, when they cannot, in their own State.

my fine fellow, I have always been an enemy to humbug." And what greater humbug than a Legislature of one State dawdling over trifles of which they know nothing, trifling as they are, while other States are totally unnoticed and uncared for; running important railroads through its territory, which deprive it in effect of millions annually?

Part of this fanatical cry about English prescriptions is raised by clergymen. Here let me speak softly. I was educated with a professed respect for holy men; I reverence them deeply yet, and ever will do so, when they *are* holy men. But may we not reasonably doubt the sanctity of *some* of them—and a pretty large proportion too—when we see them transcending their proper functions? When we see him who pretends to be an humble follower of the "meek and lowly One," the friend to truth and righteousness, arrogating to himself the right to use his sacerdotal influence, and even professional *authority*, to support a lie bud of Apollyon? When we see him consorting familiarly with the most cringing of quacks and quacksalvers, and frowning with unchristianlike malice upon the efforts of honest, conscientious, and educated physicians? When we see him almost refusing, or at *least* criminally *neglecting*, to render the last offices of consolation to one whose only crime has been the refusal to employ his pastor's pet quack? When we see his name attached to recommendations of quack medicines which he has probably never used? May we not then reasonably doubt whether such a one is not prepared to become a "wolf in sheep's" clothing, and brand him with at least presumptive self-deception and ingratitude, for no people receive more favors from us than the clergy? What would they think were we to retaliate and patronize all sorts of absurd and nonsensical *heresies*? Look at it in its very mildest light. Say he *knows* no better. What right then has he to speak so confidently? Is it either the part of gentleman or a Christian to meddle with a profession of which he must *necessarily* be ignorant, unless he has made it the study of years? Of course all these remarks are only meant for the *guilty* members of the profession. Of the newspaper editors, I spoke in a

former article. *They* are somewhat more excusable. Their occupation has a strong tendency to blunt the moral perceptions. It is their *business* to puff everything for which they are paid; and strong must be the mind and heart of him who can resist the corrupting influence of money. We cannot *expect moral* honesty in many of them, and when we *do* meet it, all honor be to the possessor. (I see an extract in the September number of your *Reporter*, from one of your New Jersey dailies, which proves that *some* honorable and upright editors are yet left. That extract should be widely circulated for the encouragement of any who may be disposed to imitate the example of independence. Of that paper's other proceedings I know nothing, but for *that* it deserves all praise.) The same men who cry *down* Latin prescriptions, cry up Female Medical Schools.

Now for a dispassionate review of the arguments used by those sage individuals who so valiantly attack all that they cannot understand. It is hard that the operations of the whole world couldn't be brought within the scope of their somewhat limited field of vision. They say that fatal mistakes occur from the ignorance of physicians, the ignorance of apothecaries, and from the possibility of even educated men mistaking the officinal terms and abbreviations of the Latin.

These objections themselves show conclusively that the objectors know nothing whatever of the structure of our official vocabulary. Few, if any of them are aware that the U. S. Pharmacopœia is a work carefully revised before publication and approved by the great American Medical Association, and that not one word is permitted to remain in it which can possibly be mistaken by an *educated* man, if properly used and written. (Of course, such men as one of my *fellow graduates*, who wrote Pharmacopœia "Farmakopea," or the other who took full notes on "*Coroseve Subliment*,"* might make a mistake in that, as they infallibly would in anything else.) The necessity for such a grand common standard is at once apparent. Otherwise

* Facts, I vouch for them on the authority of my own eyes.

persons would constantly be using different preparations under the same name, and thereby commit numerous and fatal blunders. Now, what language shall be used for this purpose? The work is, so far as *official* terms go, written in Latin, because that is the *scientific* language of the civilized world; and also because the most accurate which could be employed, and the one which gives the full force of every combination. Now see what the innovators demand. They wish us, merely to gratify a whim, to tear down the noble structure we have been so long and so carefully rearing; to substitute a language inaccurate in itself, and which *cannot* express *all* the ramifications of medical technicality; to print a book which civilized Europe must translate to read, and would then ridicule, and justly too; to acknowledge to the world that we could not entrust a work of the simplest classic language to the hands of our physicians! And what is their excuse for this worse than Vandal outrage—this Visigothic barbarity? Why, forsooth, because *ignorant* doctors and apothecaries make mistakes. Why do you *have* ignorant physicians and apothecaries? Why not raise your many headed clamor to prevent that, rather than trying to depress the noblest profession that ever existed? What difference to you that your ignorant eyes read the English name of the medicine you take? Would not the same man who errs in an *official* title, with the Dispensatory at his elbow, murder you by the wrong use of medicines, against which you can raise no objection? Do *you* know that calomel, which at one time might save your life, might at another destroy it? Would you not as willingly take it in the latter as in the former case, and look very sage while you spelled out the letters c-a-l-o-m-e-l? But, suppose your physician wrote “protochloride of mercury”—English—what more would you know than from “hydrarg. chlorid. mit.,” Latin? And yet, as calomel is a mild, or protochloride of mercury, he would, to be exact, have to give it its chemical name, for “calomel” is a mere arbitrary term, and means nothing. It could not be translated into French or German.

Scarcely any of the vulgar English names are expressive of either the *nature* or the *qualities* of a medicine, but are *entirely*

arbitrary: *e. g.*—"Blue stone," or "blue vitriol," may mean anything, and be understood as anything; but there is no mistake in *cup. sulph.* (sulphate of copper). *That* name at once indicates *what* the article is, and its nature. So with "harts-horne" and "ammon. carb.," or "aq. ammon.,"; the former is indefinite, the latter explicit. Chemistry is constantly evolving new remedial combinations for which there are *no* English names, not even imperfect ones. How do our innovators provide for that? Let us give them Latin chemical names, and the merest tyro knows at once their composition and their virtues. Does not all this show incontrovertibly the superior *safety* of a rational, chemical, and classical nomenclature? Our opponents do not wish to abolish *English* officinal terms, I presume. Now, to understand even these, my good friend, you must study chemistry, botany, and even some zoology, and if your early education has (as your objections seem to indicate) been neglected, you might learn even that awful Latin in less time. But, as I intimated before, suppose you do understand the *language*, you must then study *materia medica* to tell in what *doses* such and such remedies would be fatal. Take the late flagrant case of "ol. ric." written "ol. res." and mistaken for oil of rosemary. Suppose the patient or his friends had known it *was* oil of rosemary, think you they would have known it was in a fatal dose, or that it was improper to the case? Such an ignoramus as that doctor would have been as likely as not to give it knowingly. In the instances where morphine and strychnine have been given for quinine, was the error in the language? No, it was from the resemblance of the articles themselves, for "quin. sulph." is as different from "morph. sulph." as is the English "quinine" from "morphine."

Spend some of the time you are wasting in *leveling*, in an effort to *elevate*, and you will work to more purpose. Cry aloud for a reform of the *whole* system. Say at once, our medical men are generally unfitted for their profession. We demand a longer course of study, and better evidence of fitness in our physicians, than we have now. We demand that those who *are* educated

men should write legible hands. Say this, and we will meet you half way and assist you. Don't be content that you *have* bad doctors, and *merely* try to prevent them from erring, but see to it that they are men who will *not* err. Doctors! The very name is a farce. Talk of men being *teachers* who are scarce fitted for scholars. [As an instance of the appropriations of this term, a young *doctor* in Pennsylvania got a case of lacerated rectum, with considerable hemorrhage. A week after, he was asked what he had done. "Done? Oh, nothing *yet!* But I won't let him die: I'll call in a *physician* first." Truly he needed to call in a physician.] Purify the apothecaries' body; enact laws that no man shall keep a drug store who has not been properly educated; who has not graduated at some respectable college of pharmacy; and *when* you have done this, complain, if you will, of errors. Then clamor for English prescriptions, but not *before*. I say again, the English is the *business* language of the world, but not the language for professional technicalities. For *that* a tongue is required which is understood by the learned in every country—and such is the Latin—the universal scientific language. We say nothing for or against *law* Latin, confessed by lawyers themselves to be a horrid jargon; or concerning that of the theologians, which is probably very good. Let each defend their own. Our officinal Latin of the Pharmacopœia is pure and explicit. Let it alone, or yield yourselves the passive victims to ignorant quacks and charlatans. The tendency of our country is downward: learning is decried, and ignorance exalted: a change *must* take place; let us hope it will be in the right direction.

ERIE, PA., Oct. 20.

Obstetrical Scraps. By L. A. SMITH, M. D.

MR. EDITOR: My attention has been directed to an article in your last number, under the Eclectic and Summary Department, entitled a "Report of an Obstetrical Case," which I am glad to see published, as the practice was perfectly safe and proper, and I only wonder that the accoucheur could hesitate a moment about separating the cord in such a case, whether the child had cried or not, but more especially if it had done so. In my practice of thirty years, I have had quite a number of similar cases, and have invariably separated the cord without any injury to mother or child. It has been my custom to retain, if practicable, the ends of the cord in or under my fingers till the foetal portion was properly secured. The other portion I never tie unless in a case of twins. Immediately after the delivery of the child, and before tying and separating the cord, I am in the habit of passing my hand over the fundus of the uterus to ascertain whether there be another foetus, and also to secure a speedy contraction of that organ. This is effected by gentle pressure, and slight kneading with the fingers. I then tie the foetal portion of the cord, and separate, allowing the blood in the placenta to be discharged, which greatly diminishes its bulk, and ensures a more speedy delivery of it. So successful is my practice in this, that I am never detained at the bedside more than five or ten minutes before the labor is completed, unless there be adhesion requiring the introduction of the hand and the usual means to overcome this difficulty; and I never have any trouble from uterine hemorrhage.

My object in writing this is to add my testimony, after thirty years' experience, to the correctness of Dr. Palmore's practice in the case, and to assure the younger members of the profession that there may be exceptions to every general rule, and that this is one of them, most assuredly; and also to endorse your excellent article in the October number of your Journal for 1849, on the "manual delivery of the placenta."

I wish also to say a word on another article of yours in the October number for 1848, on the diet of infants, and to express

my hearty concurrence in all you say. There is no one thing in the practice of midwifery I had more trouble in managing to my mind, than to prevent nurses from drenching the poor infant, immediately after it is dressed, with chamber-lie (as they called it) and molasses, or something almost as bad, and for several days keeping the poor sufferer crying, in consequence of over-feeding with cat-nep tea, cracker water, or milk. My instructions are, in every case, to give it nothing of the kind, but as soon as the mother is a little rested, apply it to the breast. If this is done faithfully, the infant seldom suffers any uneasiness, and the mother escapes the milk fever, so much talked about in the nursery.

NEWARK, *September*, 1851.

Case of Reproduction of Mammary Gland after Excision.

By JAMES B. COLEMAN, M.D.

DURING the summer of 1842, I extirpated the right mammary gland of Mrs. Cranmer, aged 32 years. She was a widow, and had nursed her only child fourteen years previously. There was no show of disease of the breast, until about eighteen months before the operation. At the time of the operation it had all the characteristics of scirrhus. The usual elliptic incision was made, including the nipple, and the whole gland was abstracted. The wound healed readily, and the breast had all the flatness that follows the operation, while the other side being well developed, the loss of substance was well shown by contrast. This was the condition of the breast for more than two years, when a ring began to develop itself around the cicatrix, and increase until it made a considerable projection. Three years since she was married again, and about ten months afterwards had a child. On being called to her the second day after delivery, I found her suffering from a great distension over the right pectoral muscle. An enlarged ring, with a flat centre, measuring from outside to outside, more than the gland on the

opposite side, presented itself, with all the sensible qualities of a mammary formation. She spoke of it as giving a "trickling" sensation, as if milk were forming, and she was sure it could be drawn if there were only a nipple for the purpose. I was so confident, from all I had heard of the development of the new gland, and from what was seen in its great enlargement, that I thought it unnecessary to put her to the pain of a puncture, to prove the presence of milk. A difficulty occurred in drawing the left breast, and the secretion had to be suspended. Both sides subsided together, offering further evidence of the glandular character of the new formation.

It is more than a year since the child was born. The ring at this time is as it was previous to her last pregnancy.

No ring of glandular matter having been left outside of the dissection, which reached into the cellular structure surrounding the entire breast, and down to the pectoral muscle, so that not a vestige of a glandule remained, this case, so strongly marked, proves the reproduction of a mammary gland; the power in the organic nerves to develop glandular acini, and arrange them as near as possible to the point they once occupied. I do not know that another case of the kind has ever been noticed; and from this fact one is cautious in believing the evidence of his own senses. The late Dr. Samuel George Morton saw the case eight days after delivery, while the ring was yet greatly distended. He was so well satisfied with the fact that a reproduced gland was under his observation, that he said this strange vital phenomenon ought to be made a subject of careful research.

Ought this reproduction to be considered physiologically impossible? The peculiar force that directs the formative organic elements themselves, in particular structures, is as incomprehensible in directing the rudiments of the first gland, as in this. There must have been an arrangement, obedient to some impulse which was conveyed through the nerve destined to control the organism. The arteries carried the material for its formation. From an imperceptible point, the gland, with its connecting vessels, and larger excretory ducts, was developed. Now, the stimulus continuing through a healthy nerve, and all the organic

elements being plentifully supplied to its extremity, a development of glandular matter might take place as the simple appropriate action of the part. The arrangement of excretory ducts is a higher action in the organic formations than the production of gland itself; they are made in anticipation of the office that is to be performed; for when the gland grows to sufficient power to begin its secretions, the canals are ready to carry them off. In the structure of the lungs we find an extensive system of tubes for inflation and discharge, ready for action at the first breath. We know that a portion of a lung has been destroyed, and its place supplied by reproduced air-cells, while the regularly organized air-tubes are never restored.

In these cases of destroyed pulmonary structure, the nervous extremities are supposed to be as much impeded in their function, as that of the mammary nerve divided by a clean incision. Yet they reproduce air-cells in some instances, sufficient to fill large cavities. In the case under consideration, there was no power to form lacteal ducts, although the glandular matter is found in such abundance.

When glands grow, it is an addition of vesicle to vesicle, like atom to atom, in crystallization. If a portion be destroyed, and the gland ever swell to its original size, it is a reproduction, for the ultimate elementary forms being of definite size, an increase of volume argues new accessions of these portions. Not so with the excretory vessels of the gland; they are a more complex structure, and when destroyed cannot be restored as originally formed.

May we not, then, infer that the nerves which go to any particular gland, if left in a healthy state after the extirpation of that gland, may reproduce, in some cases, from the blood in the cellular tissues in which they terminate, glandulæ of their specific kind; and this, the more readily when these glandulæ are of the simplest in their functions.

TRENTON, Oct. 18, 1851.

EDITORIAL.

MEDICAL REFORM.

WE cannot tell why, but true it is that the *Reporter* has been sought by several correspondents, of late, as a suitable medium for communicating their views on the subject of medical reform; and, while we have cheerfully given them a hearing through our pages, and, in the present number, send out no less than *three* essays bearing upon this matter, we believe the subject is ample enough, and the profession sufficiently interested in it, to warrant us in adding a few thoughts to those already exhibited. Much stress is laid upon the fact that there exists a necessity for increased mental cultivation, as a preliminary requisite to a course of medical studies, while the professional requirements themselves should embrace a more extensive scope than they now do. We freely agree with all this; but we would not overlook a very important pre-requisite, which should be demanded of all who seek the honors of the doctorate. We refer to *evidences of a sound moral character*.

We feel confident that this matter is not regarded with the seriousness and importance which it demands of an enlightened and honorable profession; and we are equally assured, that were our portals never stained by the hands of the vulgar and profane, who sometimes press through them to an honorable seat within, there would be less cause for complaint, and less fear of quackery than there now is. Vice, wherever it shows its hideous form, exerts more influence to corrupt, than virtue does to reclaim. One instance of public immorality will throw around it an atmosphere, which it will take hundreds of virtuous examples to dissipate; and it behooves the private practitioner to see to it, that those who seek his instructions as a medical teacher, should be subjects of a correct moral training, that could find no enjoyment in the low slang of the multitude, who would fain turn the current of

knowledge from its legitimate course, and cause it to minister to the accomplishment of its own demoralizing ends.

The code of ethics acknowledged by the profession of the United States is, in itself, a good moral code, and yet, there are practitioners whose standard of morality is so far below it, that they cannot, from a degree of mental obliquity of which they are the victims, live up to its requisitions. Men are often found in the profession who seem to desire to abide by its system of ethics, but who do not realize its spirit, and cannot appreciate its harmonizing tendencies. They fail to do this, because they have embraced the profession as a *mere* business engagement, and, pursuing it as such, they level it to the common standard of mere business men. There is nothing in the profession of a huckster that prevents him from exposing his commodities to the people, and seeking custom from house to house; even a merchant may compete with his fellows in trade, by means of puffs, and references, without dishonoring his calling; and is it any marvel that those who enter *our* profession with no higher motive—with no loftier idea of its claims and its honors, should measure their conduct by the same rule? Is it any wonder that we find them insinuating themselves, by what they may call *honorable* "tricks of trade," into the path of others who pursue the same profession? If it is necessary for the physician to take his *brain* with him to the bedside of his patient, it is equally necessary that he should take his *conscience* also; and if it be true that he cannot properly pursue his calling without having cultivated and improved the former, it is equally true that the latter should be enlightened with a true sense of his moral obligations. If his knowledge be not guided by a high-toned moral sentiment, he will be no honor to his profession, and worthy only of a place with the reckless charlatan. There are many secret ways by which the reputation of another may be injured; a mere word, look, or gesture may sometimes convey an expressive meaning to the watchful mind of a patient or his friends. A high moral tone will always command respect; it will always ensure a welcome greeting with those of like character.

Let us seek to elevate the tone of our beloved profession, by elevating ourselves above all that is groveling, and undignified.

OBSTETRICAL TEACHING.

THERE is no single subject connected with clinical teaching, which, to us, seems more important than that of practical instruction in operative midwifery, and we are pleased to introduce to the notice of our readers, the fact that, in New York and Philadelphia, this subject has claimed the attention of competent private practitioners, who have entered upon the work with an interest and zeal, which ought to be encouraged by a good attendance of pupils. Dr. Augustus K. Gardner, of New York, proposes, during the coming winter, to give a series of demonstrations on this branch of medical science, by which the student may learn from the manikin, and by actual experience, such obstetrical operations as he will meet with in his subsequent practice. Dr. Gardner has made such arrangements that he will be enabled to teach, by the appearances of the breast and nipple, the diagnosis of pregnancy; by the *toucher* and *ballotement*, the date of pregnancy; by the stethoscopic signs, the condition of the foetus, &c. Manipulations with the hand upon the manikin and the living subject are the only true means of gaining an available knowledge of obstetrical science; and these may be obtained of Dr. G. for five dollars—for a single course.

We would mention also, the Obstetric Institute of Philadelphia, which has grown up under the fostering care of Dr. Joseph Warrington of that city. We well remember the instructions we received under the auspices of this institution, and when troubled with a difficult case of labor, we recur, almost invariably, to the principles there received, and have never yet found them unavailing in the trying hour.

The lessons of the professor in the lecture-room are put in practice under the more private and social teachings of the Institute; and, while the former are necessary to prepare the soil and scatter the seed, the latter are the gentle rains which revive and invigorate the tender germ, bringing it forward from growth to growth, till a harvest of experience is laid by in the mind of

the young practitioner, which relieves him of embarrassment when separated from the counsel of instructors, and thrown upon the world to find his way to honor and usefulness.

May these twin sisters, in the sister cities, vie with each other in promoting sound obstetrical learning, and eventually receive the full accomplishment of their anticipated reward!

THE MEDICAL EXAMINER.

SOME months ago we had occasion to remind our brethren of the *Examiner* that we were invariably overlooked in their published list of exchanges, while the other journals were punctually noticed. After a paragraph upon this subject, we were placed upon their list *twice*; but since that time, while we have sent the *Reporter* punctually in exchange, we have entirely, and we think, rather strangely, escaped the attention of those who make up the *Examiner's* list. It seems a singular inadvertence, especially now that we pay *monthly*, instead of quarterly visits. But we know very well that our city friends are often much occupied with the *toils and trials of arduous professional life*; and, while we promise fidelity on our own part, and intend always to manifest a fraternal feeling, we are quite willing to overlook the oversight, and always give the *Examiner* a name and a place with us.

A WHISPER TO SUBSCRIBERS.

THE publisher is at our elbow, and quietly suggests that if each subscriber to the *Reporter* would procure another (and there is probably not one who could not procure two), and send him the name and the "needful," how briskly our enterprise would succeed. Really, brethren, it would place us out of the reach of embarrassment, and give us an opportunity to do as much more good in return. Will you not try it? Ask your neighbors.

The New York Medical Times.—The first number of this sprightly-looking monthly which was announced in our last issue, lies on our table, and gives promise of future excellence and usefulness. It contains thirty-two pages monthly, and is published

at two dollars per annum, under the editorial supervision of Dr. J. G. Adams. We welcome it to our list of exchanges, and trust that the *fears* of the editor as to its short life will not be realized, though we can assure him that his experience will be very different from that of most publishers of medical journals, if he is able in one year to make even an approach to meeting his expenses.

We would take the liberty of suggesting to the editor the inappropriateness of his own heading *Surgical Nicknacks*, unless he is going to publish under that head "trifles," which will be hardly worth the attention of medical men, whose time is usually too precious to be spent on "bawbles." Still, we must regard some of the remarks on that word, and on other matters connected with the *Times*, which appeared in the last number of the *New York Medical Gazette*, as a species of hypercriticism to which we are sorry to see that journal is too much addicted. "Live and let live," is a good motto.

ECLECTIC AND SUMMARY DEPARTMENT.

Medical Properties and Uses of the Cimicifuga Racemosa. By E. M. BRUNDIGE, M. D.—As an article of the *Materia Medica*, this plant is of comparatively recent introduction, and its medical properties seem hitherto to have been imperfectly investigated. Mild tonic virtues have been ascribed to it as well as the property of exciting the secretions of the skin, kidneys, and bronchial tubes. Emetic and cathartic operations are likewise said to have been produced by it, but I have never observed these effects; perhaps, because my doses have been too small, or the preparation chiefly used has been the alcoholic, and not the proof spirit tincture. Alcohol takes up from this root very little coloring matter, and perhaps it rejects something upon which its emetic properties depend. But of its narcotic principle it is a perfect solvent. The therapeutical effects that have been ascribed to this, in my opinion, would receive a ready solution on the supposition that it acts only as a narcotic. That it possesses this property to a considerable degree, can scarcely be doubted. It is a stimulant narcotic, in over-doses producing vertigo even to falling, from which the patient soon recovers. When any tendency to cerebral plethora exists, it is one of the worst remedies that can be used, never failing to increase headache and vertigo. In diseases depending upon innervation, it is one of the best remedies. It is a very prompt and efficient remedy in many cases of atonic

and irritable dyspepsia, in doses of grs. x of the powder three times daily. If it has proved decidedly useful in pulmonary cases, as has been asserted, it has probably been when the lung affection depended on irritation in the digestive organs. Its curative effects in subacute and chronic rheumatism is unquestionable. In the treatment of this complaint, as well as in neuralgia, it is often advantageous to combine with it as much colchicum as may be required to keep up sufficient action of the bowels. The tincture of hyoscyamus has been added with happy effect in cases of rheumatism, attended by unusual pain and irritation. A liberal application of the tincture to the surface, both in rheumatism and neuralgia, has been found very useful. Internally, the powder should be administered in grs. xx doses, three or four times a day. The quantity may be increased if necessary. In chorea, I have not seen it tried, but should expect it to exert a controlling influence. Parturient properties have been ascribed to it, and not without cause. As a means of increasing uterine action, it is far less energetic than ergot, but often a better remedy, since the energy with which ergot acts is frequently an objection to its use. In cases requiring but moderate aid, a teaspoonful of the tincture, given for two or three successive half hours, will, in a short time, excite steady and efficient action which usually lasts till delivery. As a means of detecting false labor pains, it is very valuable, as it soon arrests them, restoring to the patient comfortable and healthy feelings. The frequent vomiting often so annoying in parturition is immediately relieved by it, while the uterine action is increased.

The foregoing are, I believe, about all the purposes for which this article has been used, and are of themselves of sufficient importance to establish its character as a remedial agent. I am now about to present it in a new and far more interesting light, and to state facts to show that, in the treatment of one disease at least, it possesses most extraordinary powers.

I have been accustomed to see this remedy applied to the inflammatory diseases of the eye of the horse, as well as to inflammations in other parts, from early youth, with the most complete success, the inflammation subsiding in from twenty-four to forty-eight hours. In these cases, the decoction was used, the parts being kept constantly wet with it. Dr. Close, of Portchester, with whom I studied, first applied it to the human eye, and to him I am indebted for valuable statistics.

Ophthalmia, in its various stages and degrees, but especially in its recent and acute form, is the disease over which the cimicifuga has been found to exert an influence so decisive and so prompt, as to establish for it a claim of superiority over every other mode of treatment. By the application of two or three drachms of the tincture to the region of the eye, the disease has been overcome in twenty-four hours. Cures just as prompt and complete have often been made, not rarely and in a few equivocal cases, but constantly as often as the disease has occurred, and in its most aggravated forms. This has been done unaided by any other means, not even by a purgative, but solely by the application of this simple and apparently trivial remedy. To secure a result so desirable, a saturated alcoholic tincture of the dried root is indispensable. A weaker tincture will not succeed unless the quantity is considerably increased, and then the stimulus of the alcohol in sensitive persons is sometimes so great as to increase the disease, and thus prevent a cure. The proper quantity to be applied, when the inflammation is confined to one eye, is a drachm, and twice the quantity when both eyes are affected. It should be applied slowly and cautiously with a pencil brush, the eyelids being closed so as to prevent, as far as possible, the fluid penetrating between them. Should this occasionally happen, the temporary smarting will not be followed by any unfavorable effect. The

brush, when first charged, should be applied to the edge of the hair, at the greatest distance from the eye, passed entirely around it, approaching nearer as the fluid becomes exhausted, and finishing over the eyelids. This course should be repeated until the liquid is all applied, suspending the process now and then to afford the skin time to dry. The application should never be hurried, nor the surface to which it is applied too limited, but should comprise the forehead, temples, superior maxillary region, sides of the nose, and eyelids. Its application to so extended a surface is necessary, that all the nerves around the eye may be brought under its influence, and through their action on the blood-vessels, the circulation of the inflamed organ be restored to its normal state. In recent and not very severe cases one application is sufficient, but in more aggravated cases, it should be repeated after a lapse of two or three hours, and occasionally may be required the second day. In chronic cases, the application must be repeated for several successive days, although cases of five weeks' standing have yielded to a single application. In very old and especially chronic cases, the power of the remedy has been greatly enhanced by being used in conjunction with the ointment of iodide of potassium, the tincture being applied first, and the ointment immediately after. In cases attended with unusual pain and irritability, the addition of sulph. morph. grs. iv or v to the \mathfrak{zj} of the tincture, will be found very useful. When the skin about the eyelids is very red and sensitive, with a tendency to excoriation, so that from the stimulus of the alcohol the application can scarcely be borne, dissolving tannin grs. vii to xii in the tincture will immediately obviate the difficulty. The class of cases in which this remedy shows the most marked effect, is that in which the disease is of an acute form attended by great pain and intolerance of light. The first case to which this treatment was applied, was that of a little boy, who was lying in a darkened room with his eyes firmly closed, and unable to open them. On a forcible inspection, the sclerotic coat was seen gleaming through a flood of tears of a fiery red color. Extreme reluctance to submit so young a child to the usual treatment, induced the practitioner to try the tincture of *cimicifuga*, having previously witnessed its curative influence in some other forms of local inflammation. It was accordingly applied in the manner above described, and repeated in the afternoon. On calling the following morning, the mother of the little boy was leading him about the yard, his eye entirely cured. Results as striking as this have followed every case when a proper application has been made. I have never yet failed in a single case. Dr. Close, in a practice of five years, gives only one case in which the disease resisted its influence, and that yielded to the remedy after the usual depletory treatment, and in the village where he resides numerous cases occur.

In the purulent form of ophthalmia, but one opportunity has occurred in which I have applied it. Four cases occurred in a family, contracted from a colored girl who came among them, partially cured, from Bellevue Hospital. Three of these yielded, in about a week, to the daily application of the tincture. The fourth was very obstinate, confining the patient to a dark room for three or four weeks, but gave way at last to blisters to the back of the neck, and quinine internally. During the whole of this period the pain and suffering were greatly relieved by the external application of the tincture, applied at any time when the pain became more aggravated.

Should any of my medical brethren be induced to try this mode of treatment, I must insist upon the observation of the precautions above pointed out, both as to the strength of the tincture and the mode of applying it, and I would especially caution them against leaving the application to the patient or his friend. A properly prepared tincture must be used, the root having been gathered within six months.

A case of neuralgia successfully treated by *cimicifuga*, will close my observations on the use of this article. A young lady had been suffering for more than two years with this disease in the third branch of the fifth pair, for which, early in the disease, a sound molar tooth had been extracted, because the pain always concentrated there. The pain continued to return in daily paroxysms. The usual treatment was resorted to with but slight relief. The last article used was the tincture of the *cimicifuga*, in doses of a drachm, three or four times a day internally, the same being applied externally, about the same number of times. In three weeks, the pain had entirely ceased. Thirteen months afterwards, it returned on the opposite side of the face, and was effectually removed, in a few days, by the same treatment, no return of the disease having occurred for the last three years.—*N. Y. Medical Gazette*.

Hydrastis Canadensis in *Gonorrhœa*. By D. M. McCANN, M. D., Martinsburg, Ohio.—As your excellent Medical Journal has for its object the diffusion of knowledge advantageous to the medical profession, permit me to call the attention of the profession through its columns to the use of *Hydrastis Canadensis*, (yellow root, orange root,) in gonorrhœa.

I am not aware that any of my brethren have ever used it in this affection, before myself. My experience, however, in the administration of it, though not extensive, is yet sufficient to warrant me in soliciting a trial of it by those having more opportunity of testing its curative power than I have. I have used it in several cases in various stages of the disorder, and in every case with the most satisfactory results; more especially with males than females. I was led to its use by noticing its well-known sanative properties over inflammations of mucous and epithelial structures, such as aphthæ of the mouth, &c. The ardor urinæ, and discharge of mucus, have been entirely suspended in every case in from twenty-four to seventy-two hours. In some cases I used the balsam copaibæ, in others injections of infusion of the *hydrastis* alone, but with about the same results, a perfect and permanent eradication of the disorder.

I have varied the strength to suit the case in its different stages, but as a general rule I have used about one drachm of the dried root to the pint of infusion—injecting a syringe-full three or four times a day.

I hope that some of the profession will give this article a fair trial.—*Ohio Med. and Surg. Journ.*

[About the time of our commencing the practice of medicine, ten years ago, our attention was called to the use of the infusion of yellow root as an injection in gonorrhœa, by a skillful and experienced physician of this city, Dr. U. E. Ewing. At his suggestion we employed it ourself, and with such good result, that we have continued, to the present time, to use it in cases in which astringent injections were indicated. A strong infusion of this root containing a small proportion of sulphate of copper in solution, forms one of the best injections for gonorrhœa we have ever used; and for some years after we had our attention called to it by Dr. E. we used it almost exclusively, preferring it to any other injection that we had employed. Of late years, however, we have used the solution of chloride zinc, not because of its most superior efficacy, but simply because it is more readily and conveniently prepared. We have tried nearly, if not quite all, the injections we have seen recommended for gonorrhœa, and we have no hesitation in giving the two already mentioned the preference. With the infusion of yellow root alone, or containing sulphate of copper in solution, and the solution of chloride of zinc, we think all the good may be accomplished in the treatment of gonorrhœa which can be gained by injections.]

The formula for the infusion of yellow root, as directed by Dr. Ewing, which he has employed upwards of twenty years, is as follows:—

Pulv. Hydrastis Canadensis,	Ounce i.
Aquæ Puræ,	Ounce viij.
	M.

Digest for several hours and strain.

To this Dr. E. is in the habit of adding sulph. cupri drachm i. We have directed this injection repeatedly in confirmed cases of gonorrhœa and gleet, and our own experience confirms the favorable report of its value which we received from Dr. Ewing ten years ago.]—*Transylvania Medical Journal*.

A Case of Hæmoptysis treated by the Tourniquet. By G. P. HACHENBERG, M. D., of Springfield, Ohio.—Several weeks since, in crossing the *Seven Mountains* in the interior part of Pennsylvania, I observed sitting by the wayside, a poor fellow who was laboring under a violent attack of hæmoptysis. He was an invalid in the company of a party of movers traveling towards the "great west." His friends were very much alarmed for his safety, and the urgency of his case was such as to demand immediate attention. Under this conviction and in the excitement of the moment I proffered my services uninvited; forgetful of the fact, that I had in my possession at the time, neither medical agents nor surgical implements. After a slight examination of the patient I proposed bleeding, and an immediate search was made by his friends for something to answer as a substitute for a lancet. But as nothing could be found among the effects of the company to serve our purpose, and as the nature of the case was such as to threaten a serious termination, I was obliged in the emergency to consider of some other method of alleviating the sufferings of the patient. As the hemorrhage continued, the symptoms indicated were a low temperature of the skin, weak pulse, rigor, cold perspiration, sinking, &c. "A jug of whisky" was the only thing in the form of *medicine* in the possession of the company, and for aught we knew to the contrary, the only thing for miles around. Hastily directing the patient to divest himself of his clothing, I urged his companions to make a copious application of the spirits to each of the extremities, accompanied by diligent friction. This was immediately followed by the application of a "field tourniquet" (made of handkerchiefs) to the superior portion of each extremity. In a short time the veins became visibly congested, and in less than fifteen minutes the hemorrhage ceased.—*Western Lancet*.

A new Method of preventing Fats and Fixed Oils from becoming Rancid. By CHARLES W. WRIGHT, M. D., of Cincinnati.—In company with one of the early settlers of this part of the United States, the conversation turned upon the history and habits of the Indians, formerly living in this valley, and among other things he mentioned the curious manner in which they preserved bear's fat from becoming rancid, of which the following is a brief account: In the early part of winter the fat is removed from the body of the animal and subjected to the *trying-out* process, as it is termed; that is, it is subjected to a degree of heat sufficient to coagulate and separate the azotized matter which subsides to the bottom of the vessel, and the oil is drained off. After this operation is completed, it is matter again with the bark of the slippery elm tree (*ulmus fulva*) finely divided, which may be used either in the fresh or dry state. The proportion is about one drachm of the bark to the pound of fat. When these substances are heated together

for a few minutes, the bark shrinks and gradually subsides, after which the fat is strained off and put aside for use.

The bark communicates an odor to the fat that is hardly to be distinguished from that of the kernel of the hickory nut.

Thinking this might be turned to account in the preservation of the fatty matters, I subjected many of them to experiment, and in every instance the result was alike successful. One specimen of butter (an article which is well known becomes rancid sooner than any other kind of fat) prepared in this way more than a year ago, is as sweet and free from disagreeable odor as the day it was made, having been exposed all this time to the atmosphere and changes of temperature.

Hog's lard may be preserved in the same manner.

This fact will be of much importance in the preparation of cerates and ointments, which can be thus protected from rancidity.

In the lubrication of delicate machinery, an acquaintance with this fact may be of benefit by preventing the injury that results from the use of rancid oil.—*Ibid.*

Eating Pork.—The New Hampshire Shakers have abandoned pork, as food, and they are not without good reasons for doing so. Moses understood the injurious effects of swine's flesh, which he learned of the Egyptians, and therefore interdicted it in his judicial character. The Egyptian priests, who were both philosophers and physicians, ages upon ages before the birth of the Jewish law-giver, had gained an insight into the constitution of man, which, transmitted through the Israelites, diluted and corrupted as it may be, still exerts a powerful influence on all modern systems of legislation. Whatever was unclean in the Mosaic catalogue of edibles, is still thought to be unfit for human food, with the exception of swine. It is an anomaly that the one article, more abhorred than all others in the Levitical code, should become a favorite dish with us American Gentiles. Scrofulous affections, if not generated, are thought to be aggravated by pork; and the measles has been charged to its use. The hog is omnivorous, and more uncleanly than any other animal domesticated for economical purposes—a fact in itself sufficiently strong to deter the Jews from using the meat. Let those who are possessed of the information, show how much more we suffer from certain cutaneous and glandular diseases than the people of countries where pork is not used for food. We never saw a single swine in the whole of Egypt or Syria. The old prejudice, or the ancient interdiction, appears to influence the public sentiment in those countries. With these views, we doubt not that the Shakers will be gainers in health, and perhaps in longevity, by eschewing pork. Lard oil and stearine, in domestic economy, are invaluable articles; and when the demand for them requires all the swine raised, it will be a happy circumstance for the people.—*Boston Med. and Surg. Journal*, Oct., 1851.

Cases of Asthma treated by the Iodide of Potassium. (Read at the September meeting of the Medical Society of Virginia.) By F. H. DEANE, M. D.—I was induced to employ the agent by a statement given me by a clergyman residing in the State of Illinois. During a visit to this city two or three years before the statement just alluded to, I attended him in a protracted and violent attack of asthma. I found great difficulty in affording him even temporary relief, although every means were most perseveringly tried. He said, for the next two years after this attack his general health greatly failed, and the paroxysms of asthma were so frequent and obstinate, he was unable to preach oftener than one Sunday in three—life had become almost a bur-

then to him. In this state of things he was advised to try a sea voyage. He accordingly sailed for Liverpool—his sufferings were not relieved during the voyage or after reaching his port of destination. He was now advised to visit Dublin to obtain the advice of Dr. Stokes—he was under Stokes's care for many weeks, but did not receive the slightest benefit—so much so that Dr. Stokes advised him to try traveling for twelve months in the South of Europe. This was too inconvenient to him—therefore, he determined to return to his home in Illinois. On reaching home he was as great a sufferer as ever. He was now advised by a physician residing in his vicinity to try the hydriod. of potash—he made use of the remedy, and found relief too immediately to leave any doubt as to the propriety of attributing his increased comfort to this agent—that whilst he had since been frequently threatened with a paroxysm of the disease, he had always been able to ward it off by a resort to this medicine. That his health had greatly improved, and he was now enabled to preach with a degree of comfort he had been a stranger to for so many years.

A short time after this narrative, I was summoned to see a youth fifteen or sixteen years old. I found him suffering from a severe attack of asthma. I was told he had been a great sufferer from this disease for seven or eight years—that during this time he had been under the care of three or four different medical men without experiencing any sensible improvement in his health. Some of his medical attendants regarded the affection as symptomatic of some heart affection. My own observations of the case did not verify this supposition. I directed him to take five grs. of the hydriod. of potash every two hours—the next morning I found him relieved, and was told he was sensible of great relief soon after taking the second or third dose. He was under my observation for the next eighteen months, and during the whole of this time never had an attack of the disease. He was however frequently threatened with it, but had always been able to ward it off by resorting to this article.

The third case I will mention, is that of a married woman, aged thirty-five. For the last eight years she has always had an attack of asthma in the month of May. The other months of the year she enjoys uninterrupted health, and is not liable to cold, although frequently exposed to the vicissitudes of weather. I had the opportunity of attending her in one of these attacks. The disease was always ushered in by just such symptoms as those characterizing epidemic influenza—pain about the head and eyes, accompanied by incessant sneezing and most copious effluxions from the nose and eyes. These symptoms generally lasted three or four weeks, and were invariably followed by severe asthma lasting quite as long. In this attack I used a great variety of remedies, without affording any satisfactory relief. The following spring she was attacked in the same manner. Two or three days after the symptoms characterizing influenza had appeared, I was requested to see her. She was directed to take eight grains of the hydriod. of potash every four hours. These symptoms were greatly mitigated during the next twenty-four hours; and after using the agent in this way for three days, they were so much relieved that she was directed to discontinue the remedy. Nitric acid was substituted. A few days after commencing the use of nitric acid, she was attacked by a severe paroxysm of asthma. The hydriod. of potash was directed to be taken, eight grains at a time, every two hours. Before the ensuing morning she was relieved of all symptoms of asthma. She ascribes the return of her asthmatic symptoms in the month of May to the odor from flowers, as her house is surrounded by roses and other plants.

I have treated three or four cases besides these just related, with this

agent, and with results equally satisfactory. I presume it is unnecessary to give an account of them, as there was nothing peculiar in them. I regret that the cases I have mentioned are so imperfect in some important particulars. I allude to the circumstance that I have not informed the society upon the pathological conditions involved in either of my cases. This negligence is partly owing to the fact that when I commenced the use of this agent I had scarcely any hope that it would relieve my patient, and in the first two or three instances I was disposed to ascribe the relief felt to some natural change in the disease itself. Subsequent trials with the remedy convinced me that in this opinion I was mistaken. The cases I have reported, I think, at least ought to encourage us in further trials with the remedy. I am disposed to believe it will be found to be an agent greatly mitigating the paroxysmal features of the disease, and that it will lessen the distressing catarrh so often found existing between the paroxysms of the affection. To give weight to what I have said in relation to the relief obtained by my patients by the use of this article, I will merely say, until I used it in asthma I was disposed to regard it as destitute of medicinal value. I considered it almost as inert, as valueless as sarsaparilla. I had given it for a great variety of disorders, in larger doses too than its friends had ever dreamed of, and I had never been able to see any effect from it whatever. I never met with a patient who was quite sure that it increased any of the secretions or excretions of the body. 'Tis true I have never had much experience with it in the treatment of secondary syphilis—and here it is said its good effects are most conspicuously to be seen.—*Stethoscope*, Oct., 1851.

WE would call the attention of the District Reporters and the profession generally, to the following circular of the chairman of the Standing Committee of the N. J. Medical Society. This committee has hitherto been much embarrassed in its operations on account of reporters and others not giving as much attention to the making out of reports as the subject deserves.—[EDITOR.]

To the District Medical Societies in the State of New Jersey.

THE STANDING COMMITTEE, appointed at the last meeting of the State Medical Society, anxious to make their report as full and interesting as they possibly can, respectfully invite from members of the profession generally, contributions and reports on those points particularly alluded to in the by-laws of the Society; viz. :—

1st. The nature and mode of treatment of any epidemic which may have occurred.

2d. Curious medical facts, discoveries, or remarkable cases.

3d. Observations on medical or philosophical subjects, either of a general or local nature.

4th. Any irregularity, neglect, or contempt of the laws, rules, and regulations of the State Medical Societies.

The committee would respectfully call attention, not only to the change of the time of meeting of the Society, but to the alteration in the laws, repealing the appointment of "*District Reporters*," and providing for "a reporter from each District Society, requiring him to report to the Standing Committee, on or before the 1st of January annually." The committee would, however, solicit those who may favor them with communications, to forward the same on or before the 15th of December, to Dr. J. B. Munn, Chatham, Morris Co., Dr. A. Coles, Newark, Essex Co., or to

JAS. PAUL, *Chairman*.

TRENTON, N. J., June 10th, 1851.